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Sixty-ninth session

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Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 1st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 3 October 2014, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Ružička ..... (Slovakia)
Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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14-62031 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Organization of work (A/C.5/69/1; A/C.5/69/L.1)

1. **The Chair** urged members to respect meeting start times and restrict the length of their statements so that the Committee could conduct its work efficiently. He invited members to consider the proposed programme of work of the Committee for the main part of the session and the note on the status of preparedness of the relevant documentation (A/C.5/69/L.1). A separate list on the status of documentation would be issued for the first and second parts of the resumed session. He wished to highlight some of the recommendations made by the General Committee in its first report (A/69/250) and adopted by the General Assembly at its 2nd plenary meeting. With regard to the rationalization of work, the General Assembly had requested each Main Committee to further discuss its working methods at the beginning of every session, and had invited the Chairs of the Main Committees, at the sixty-ninth session, to brief the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, as appropriate, on the discussions on the working methods.

2. The Committee should complete its work for the main part of the session by 12 December 2014. In view of financial constraints, meetings of the Main Committees, including informal meetings, should start promptly at 10 a.m. and be adjourned by 6 p.m. In accordance with past practice, the requirement that at least one quarter of the members should be present in order to declare a meeting open and to permit debate to proceed should be waived. The General Committee had drawn attention to rules 99 (b), 106, 109, 114 and 115 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly regarding the conduct of meetings.

3. Efforts should be made to reduce the number of resolutions adopted, and resolutions should not contain requests for reports from the Secretary-General unless such reports were strictly necessary for the implementation of those resolutions or for the continued consideration of an item. Resolutions should be short and action-oriented. In addition, the Main Committees should merely take note of the reports of the Secretary-General or of subsidiary bodies which did not require a decision by the General Assembly and should neither debate nor adopt resolutions on them unless specifically requested to do so.

4. **Mr. Llorentty Solíz** (Plurinational State of Bolivia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that adequate time must be allocated to allow thorough consideration of the various items in the proposed programme of work and their successful conclusion. The Group remained concerned that important reports had yet to be issued. All documents must be issued in all official languages in a timely manner, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, so that the Committee could carry out its work effectively and take well-informed decisions. The failure of the Secretariat to present those reports in accordance with the rules of procedure often forced Member States and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to work under time pressure and had a serious effect on deliberations.

5. The Group welcomed the balanced programme of work prepared by the Bureau, which should be adjusted throughout the session in the light of the progress made. In accordance with past practice, it would endorse the proposed programme of work on the understanding that it would be reviewed and amended after the first week, as needed. The Group had always stressed that negotiations should be conducted in an open, inclusive and transparent manner to ensure that decision-making took place among the entire membership, not within small groups. The negotiation process, a confidence-building exercise driven by Member States, must be allowed to run its course. Member States had a collective responsibility to take decisions that were beneficial to the Organization and enabled it to discharge its mandates effectively and efficiently.

6. **Ms. Tan** (Singapore), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that ASEAN would pay particular attention to the discussions on special political missions, human resources management and the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015. The Secretariat must be given sufficient resources to fulfil the mandates approved by the General Assembly and ASEAN supported efforts to optimize the functioning of the Secretariat and improve mandate delivery. It also attached great importance to the discussions on the funding and backstopping of special political missions, including the creation of a separate account. Lastly, the Secretariat and the Advisory Committee were urged to ensure the timely issuance of their reports.

7. **Ms. Coto-Ramírez** (Costa Rica), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and

Caribbean States (CELAC), said that funding and backstopping arrangements for special political missions was an issue of particular interest to the Latin American and Caribbean region since the mechanisms for financing those missions were inadequate. In order to enhance the efficiency and transparency of the Organization's budgetary process, a special and separate account should be established for special political missions, which should be budgeted, funded and reported on annually with a financial period of 1 July to 30 June. The financing of such missions distorted the regular budget and CELAC therefore urged the permanent members of the Security Council to ensure that their special responsibility for maintaining international peace and security was reflected in their financial contributions to all peace operations, including special political missions. CELAC was fully committed to a comprehensive reform of those missions and the need for a separate account was becoming more pressing each year.

8. It was crucial that all the necessary official documentation was available to ensure that the Committee could work efficiently and hold proper negotiations. CELAC therefore reiterated its call for strict respect of the principle of timely distribution of documents in all languages, in accordance with the rules of procedure and successive resolutions of the General Assembly on the pattern of conferences. Lastly, CELAC would actively engage in transparent, inclusive negotiations on all agenda items in order to reach agreements that were satisfactory to all Member States and conducive to the proper functioning of the Organization.

9. **Mr. Dosseh** (Togo), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the programme of work should continue to be adjusted in line with developments in the negotiations. The Group remained concerned at the delays in issuing official documentation and called on the Secretariat and other stakeholders to ensure that all reports were issued on time so that the Committee could make informed decisions. The Group hoped that outcomes would be reached on the financing of peacekeeping operations, as well alternative funding and backstopping arrangements for special political missions, including the establishment of a separate account, which was long overdue. The Group would closely examine issues related to construction and property management at the Economic Commission for Africa and the United Nations Office at Nairobi. The Committee must conduct its work in an open, all-inclusive and transparent manner, and should respect the deadline set for completion.

10. **Mr. Vrailas** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and in addition the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the Committee's heavy agenda contained important and complex items, and completing its programme of work by the agreed deadline would require a collective effort and constructive negotiations. The timely availability of documentation was a precondition for a successful outcome of the Committee's work but, despite the Secretariat's efforts, the submission of relevant reports had again been delayed. All documents were needed in all official languages, particularly on key issues such as the budget items.

11. **Mr. Minami** (Japan) said that the timely issuance of documents was especially important for discussions on the budget for special political missions and members should work to reach a consensus on all items by the deadline set. His delegation would closely scrutinize all potential additional requirements under the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 and called on the Committee to strictly observe the contingency fund ceiling agreed upon by the General Assembly by prioritizing activities in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 41/213 and 42/211. With regard to the budget for the biennium 2016-2017, the Secretariat was requested to take a fresh look at needs rather than merely extending the 2014-2015 budget. His delegation would participate fully in the discussions on budget reform and recosting, and urged the Committee to agree on feasible recommendations given that becoming more efficient and cost effective was no longer optional. It would also participate actively in negotiations on human resources management issues, since those items would have a significant impact on the future of the Organization.

12. The Secretariat must provide sufficient information to enable members to make fully-informed decisions concerning long-term accommodation needs at Headquarters, as well as measures to deal with the capital master plan shortfall. Concerning the strategic heritage plan, the Secretariat should explore the use of alternative funding mechanisms in order to reduce the recently increased overall costs of the project. His delegation anticipated that the overall peacekeeping

budget for 2014-2015 would greatly exceed its historical high and it would therefore work with other delegations to ensure that peacekeeping operations and special political missions were conducted in an efficient and sustainable manner. Lastly, his delegation attached great importance to the gradual implementation of the Umoja and International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) projects.

13. **Ms. Norman Chalet** (United States of America) said that the discussions on human resources issues would be critical to the success of the Organization and her delegation supported the new mobility policy as well as measures to establish strong performance management. It was also committed to enhancing the effectiveness of the Organization's internal justice system and hoped that the comprehensive review of compensation by the International Civil Service Commission would result in a new package that would compensate staff fairly but sustainably.

14. On transparency and oversight, her delegation hoped that the Office of Internal Oversight Services would be strengthened and its mandate protected. Public disclosure of internal audit reports was essential since transparency would enhance the reputation and credibility of the Organization. When making budget decisions members must consider how best to support the Organization and improve the delivery of mandates within the confines of responsible fiscal planning. Lastly, the DC-5 option had the greatest potential for meeting the Organization's long-term accommodation needs in New York in a cost-efficient manner and her delegation therefore strongly supported adoption of that proposal.

15. **Mr. Khalizov** (Russian Federation) said that his country traditionally advocated a balanced approach to both the regular budget and peacekeeping operation budgets, and all proposals on additional allocations must be carefully justified. Measures were needed to enhance budget effectiveness but seeking savings within existing resources should not affect the implementation of mandates. The Committee needed to make an urgent decision on covering the preliminary resource requirements for the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) but his delegation expected comprehensive justification of the financial and staffing resources required as well as detailed information on the structure of the Mission and the functions of posts in order to make a well-informed decision.

16. The Russian Federation had joined the consensus on the new staff mobility policy but urged the Secretary-General to provide detailed responses on the many pending issues relating to the financial, legal and practical implications of that policy. In the light of additional information from the Secretariat, the Committee would be able to make decisions designed to fine-tune and clarify the modalities for applying the mobility policy.

17. The Secretary-General had issued bulletin ST/SGB/2004/13/Rev.1 on a new procedure for determining the personal status of Secretariat staff for the purpose of United Nations entitlements. The bulletin had substantially altered the legal basis for receiving benefits approved by the General Assembly at its 58th session and the Committee would need to examine the legal and financial consequences of that decision. Lastly, with regard to appointments and elections to subsidiary bodies, his delegation encouraged the Secretariat to prepare the traditional consolidated table with information on candidates.

18. **The Chair** said that he took it that the Committee approved the proposed programme of work on the understanding that the Bureau would take into account the views expressed and make the necessary adjustments.

19. *It was so decided.*

20. **The Chair** suggested that a deadline of 24 October should be set for the submission of candidacies for appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary bodies and other appointments and that the elections should be held on 7 November. He took it that the Committee had no objection to the suggestion.

21. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 132: Programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015

United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) and the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Ebola (A/69/404 and A/69/408)

22. **Ms. Malcorra** (Chef de Cabinet), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) and the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Ebola (A/69/404), said that the Mission and the Office had been established following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 69/1 and on the basis

of the identical letters dated 17 September 2014 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council (A/69/389-S/2014/679). The preliminary requirements for the period from 19 September to 31 December 2014 for UNMEER and the Office amounted to $49.9 million. Pending completion of the assessment of requirements in the region and the submission of a detailed revised programme budget, the General Assembly was requested to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in that amount.

23. It was essential to strengthen national authorities' capacity to stop the spread of Ebola by making an impact on the ground as quickly as possible. Many United Nations staff had been working tirelessly in the affected countries since the start of the outbreak. The Mission was designed to supplement their efforts and was already operational, with 50 staff deployed in the region. Additional logistical materials and essential items such as personal protection equipment were arriving in the affected countries.

24. The Mission had joined the growing response of the international community and other partners in support of the national authorities. It would ensure that collective efforts to introduce an Ebola response plan in each country were united by harnessing the capabilities of all United Nations actors on the ground. It would be guided by the global strategic response plan developed by the Special Envoy in consultation with the World Health Organization (WHO).

25. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of Mission, Mr. Anthony Banbury, had arrived at Mission headquarters in Accra on 29 September 2014 and was conducting consultations with national authorities and other partners in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, the most affected countries. The consultations and ongoing assessments of the situation in the region would inform the detailed planning of the ways in which the United Nations and other partners could best support the Governments concerned. Such planning would in turn inform the detailed revised programme budget submitted to the General Assembly later in the main part of the session.

26. The swift response of the General Assembly to the Secretary-General's letter reflected the urgent need for greater collective effort to support the affected countries, given the pace at which the virus had spread. Despite the growing global response, however, time remained of the essence. The proposal in the Secretary-General's report would enable UNMEER and the Office to rapidly expand their activities to suppress the outbreak.

27. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/69/408), said that the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in an amount not exceeding $49,943,600 for the requirements of the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response for the period from 19 September to 31 December 2014. It urged the Secretary-General to take its comments and recommendations into account in drafting the report containing the detailed budget submission for UNMEER, and would follow up on various matters when it considered that report.

28. **Mr. Llorentty Soliz** (Plurinational State of Bolivia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Ebola outbreak in West Africa had created an unprecedented and catastrophic humanitarian situation in the most affected countries. It had been declared by WHO to be a public health emergency of international concern, and emergency plans of action should be put in place to prevent it from spreading and to care for the victims. The Group therefore welcomed the establishment of UNMEER and expected it to receive adequate resources to fulfil its mandate. It urged the Secretary-General to quickly implement the five strategic priorities assigned to the Mission, in particular those designed to stop the spread of the disease, and would closely examine the staffing structure to ensure that resources were allocated to core activities rather than administration.

29. In the detailed budget submission, the Secretariat should provide comprehensive information on the structure of UNMEER. In the informal consultations, the Group would seek clarification regarding the operation of the multi-partner trust fund and the relationship between the fund's resources and those of the Mission.

30. Because many stakeholders were involved, the specific functions and tasks of UNMEER and other partners, as well as the lines of accountability and responsibility, should be clarified. The international

community should pursue long-term solutions by helping the affected countries to build resilient health systems and alleviate the economic effects of the disease. The Group looked forward to detailed discussion of the revised programme budget proposal and encouraged the international community to continue to support the most affected countries. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group, in the declaration adopted at their 38th annual meeting on 26 September 2014, had acknowledged that the Ebola epidemic was a threat to health security at the national, subregional, regional and global levels and called on the international community to support the affected countries because global unity was the key to defeating the disease.

31. **Mr. Dosseh** (Togo), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the outbreak of Ebola in West Africa continued to threaten lives in neighbouring countries and could spread further afield. The Group was concerned that current statistics might not reflect the gravity of the situation because of monitoring and reporting difficulties. Swift and comprehensive measures to halt the spread of the disease and address the public health crisis were needed. A coordinated and urgent international response was required in order to provide financial assistance, equipment, protective clothing, mobile laboratories and other facilities to the affected countries and the region with a view to containing the disease and ensuring that neighbouring countries and other regions had systems to prevent and trace infections.

32. The Group's endorsement of the proposal to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in the amount of $49.9 million did not constitute approval of the structures described in the Secretary-General's report (A/69/404), which must be revised to ensure that they responded effectively to the situation on the ground by reflecting the Mission's core activities. The resources must support substantive activities rather than a top-heavy administrative structure, and existing leadership structures in United Nations entities in the region and in Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and other countries should be taken into account. He requested clarification regarding the ways in which the safety and security of staff on the ground would be ensured, and urged the Secretary-General to ensure that the principle of delivering as one was applied, given the involvement of various actors of the United Nations system.

33. **Mr. Vrailas** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania and Serbia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that in its statement to the General Assembly on 19 September 2014 the European Union had expressed deep concern regarding the crisis caused by the Ebola outbreak and had deplored the loss of life among citizens of the affected countries and international responders. The European Union and its member States were playing an important role in delivering assistance to the worst affected areas and had joined national and international efforts to address the disease as efficiently as possible. All partners must work in a coherent and coordinated way and the Mission should bring together the actors' capabilities and competencies without supplanting them or duplicating their efforts.

34. Given the exponential spread of the outbreak, with the number of cases doubling every three weeks and a high mortality rate, UNMEER urgently needed to become operational. Although his delegation appreciated that the Secretary-General was not currently in a position to provide detailed budget proposals or accurate information regarding the way forward, it looked forward to receiving more information on the concept of the Mission and its relationship with other United Nations entities, timeline, funding requirements, structure and organization in the detailed budget submission. During the discussions on that submission, it would make an initial assessment of the Mission's activities and of the lessons learned, with a view to establishing best practices. His delegation's agreement to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments was without prejudice to any subsequent review of the Mission by the Committee.

35. **Mr. Kisoka** (United Republic of Tanzania) said that UNMEER should take into account existing leadership structures in the United Nations system, the region and individual countries, including United Nations country teams, to ensure that resources were used for core activities including the provision of medical training and facilities and logistical resources to eliminate Ebola. Clear leadership, reporting lines

and accountability were essential in responding to the crisis, given the many actors involved.

36. **Ms. Norman Chalet** (United States of America) said that her delegation acknowledged that the UNMEER planning process was ongoing but nevertheless expected further information regarding the ways in which the Mission would coordinate in the field and ensure an effective response to the outbreak by the United Nations and other actors. Her Government was committed to a collective approach to the threat.

37. **Mr. Minami** (Japan) said that at the United Nations High-level Meeting on Response to the Ebola Virus Disease Outbreak, held in September 2014, his Government had announced additional commitments of $40 million to combat the disease.

38. **Ms. Malcorra** (Chef de Cabinet) said that the unprecedented speed with which the proposal to establish UNMEER had been negotiated and approved showed that the international community understood the scale of the challenge, which no single Government or institution could meet. The tour of the region by the Head of Mission would enable further assessment of the proposal. The United Nations would deliver as one and build on the strengths and capacities of those in the system, but given the magnitude of the crisis the risk was not duplication of effort but failure to stop the outbreak. According to the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Ebola, a response on a scale 20 times greater than the current one would be needed to contain the disease.

39. **The Chair** said that as of 18 September 2014 5,000 cases of Ebola had been reported and 2,500 people had died, half of them in the last three weeks of the period monitored. A further 80 people were dying every day and the international community therefore needed to take action without delay. According to WHO, the cost of containing the outbreak would be $600 million.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.

United Nations A/C.5/69/SR.2

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Summary record of the 2nd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 7 October 2014, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Ružička ..... (Slovakia)
Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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14-62185 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 136: Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/69/11, A/69/11/Add.1 and A/69/70)

1. **Mr. Greiver** (Chair of the Committee on Contributions), introducing the report of the Committee on Contributions on its seventy-fourth session (A/69/11 and Add.1), said that the report contained the results of the review by the Committee on Contributions of elements of the methodology of the scale of assessments pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/238.

2. The income measure was a first approximation of capacity to pay. Further to issues highlighted by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/238, the Committee on Contributions had reaffirmed that the scale of assessments should be based on the most current, comprehensive and comparable data available for gross national income (GNI). In that connection, the Committee on Contributions had recommended that the General Assembly should encourage Member States to submit the required national accounts questionnaires under the System of National Accounts (SNA), 1993 or 2008, on a timely basis. It had also expressed support for efforts by the Statistics Division at the national level to enable Member States to submit national accounts data on a timely basis with the required scope, detail and quality.

3. Conversion rates were required in order to be able to express in a common monetary unit GNI data reported in national currencies. The Committee on Contributions had reaffirmed its recommendation that conversion rates based on market exchange rates (MERs) should be used, except when doing so would cause excessive fluctuations and distortions in GNI of some Member States expressed in United States dollars, in which case price-adjusted rates of exchange (PAREs) or other appropriate conversion rates should be applied. That income data must then be averaged over a designated base period. As the various advantages and disadvantages of both shorter and longer base periods were well known, the base period used under the current scale methodology was the result of a compromise; average of data from both a three- and a six-year base period was used. The Committee on Contributions had agreed that, once a base period had been chosen, there were advantages in using the same base period for as long as possible.

4. During its review of the debt-burden adjustment, the Committee on Contributions had noted that the unavailability of data was no longer a factor in determining whether to base the debt-burden adjustment on total external debt or public external debt; and whether the debt-stock approach or the debt-flow approach should be used. Data were now available on public external debt and on the actual repayment period. The Committee on Contributions had decided to consider further the question of the debt-burden adjustment at future sessions in the light of guidance from the General Assembly.

5. While the Committee on Contributions had agreed that the low per capita income adjustment continued to be needed in the scale methodology, it had considered various options for revising the adjustment. An alternative approach for establishing the threshold could be an inflation-adjusted threshold. The low per capita income adjustment threshold would be fixed in real terms instead of being set at the current average world per capita income for the scale base period. The Committee on Contributions had decided to consider the low per capita income adjustment further in the light of guidance from the General Assembly.

6. The current methodology included a maximum assessment rate, or ceiling, of 22 per cent, a maximum assessment rate for the least developed countries, or least developed countries ceiling, of 0.010 per cent, and a minimum assessment rate, or floor, of 0.001 per cent. The Committee on Contributions had decided to consider those elements further in the light of guidance from the General Assembly.

7. As part of its consideration of other suggestions and other possible elements for the scale methodology, the Committee on Contributions had decided to study further the question of large scale-to-scale increases in rates of assessment and discontinuity in the light of guidance provided by the Assembly. The question of annual recalculation had also been examined and would be studied further at future sessions in the light of guidance from the Assembly.

8. The report contained a review of the latest report of the Secretary-General on multi-year payment plans (A/69/70) and updated information on the status of payment plans as at 20 June 2014. The Committee on Contributions had reiterated its recommendation that the Assembly should encourage those Member States

in arrears under Article 19 of the Charter to consider submitting multi-year payment plans.

9. The Committee on Contributions had considered five requests for exemption under Article 19 of the Charter, and had urged the Member States concerned to address the growth in arrears by making annual payments exceeding current assessments in order to avoid further accumulation of debt. The Committee on Contributions had concluded that the failure of the five Member States (Central African Republic, Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Sao Tome and Principe, and Somalia) to pay the minimum amount required to avoid the application of Article 19 was due to conditions beyond their control and recommended that they should be permitted to vote until the end of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly. Only one Member State, Yemen, had been in arrears in the payment of its assessed contributions under the terms of Article 19 and had no vote in the General Assembly. However, since 20 June 2014, the Central African Republic and Yemen had made payments in sufficient amounts to reduce their arrears below the limit prescribed by Article 19. Several other Member States had informed the Committee on Contributions that every effort would be made to make payments when possible. In May 2014, Sao Tome and Principe had made its first contribution in more than a decade. Comoros continued to make regular payments, the most recent of which had been received in September 2014. That same month, Guinea-Bissau had made a payment equivalent to almost one-third of its arrears. He acknowledged the efforts being made by all those Member States to honour their financial obligations to the United Nations, despite the difficult situations they faced.

10. **Mr. Berridge** (Chief, Contributions and Policy Coordination Service), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on multi-year payment plans (A/69/70), said that the report set out the status of implementation of the sole remaining plan, submitted by Sao Tome and Principe, as at 31 December 2013. Sao Tome and Principe had made a payment under its plan in May 2014, which had been reported to the Committee on Contributions at its session in June 2014.

11. Six Member States had successfully implemented multi-year payment plans since the adoption of the system in 2002. No new payment plans had been submitted in recent years, but several Member States had indicated that they were considering the matter.

12. **Ms. Rios Requena** (Plurinational State of Bolivia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that Member States should pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions, although the special circumstances of some developing countries that prevented them temporarily from meeting their financial obligations should be taken into account.

13. The capacity to pay should remain the fundamental criterion in the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations. Core elements of the scale methodology such as the base period, gross national income, conversion rates, low per capita income adjustment, gradient, floor, least developed countries ceiling and debt-stock adjustment were not negotiable. The Assembly should, however, review the current overall ceiling, which had been fixed as a political compromise and was in consequence at odds with the principle of capacity to pay and distorted the scale of assessments.

14. She welcomed the efforts of Member States that had met their commitments under multi-year payment plans. Such plans should be voluntary and should take the State's financial situation into account. They should not, however, be used as a means of exerting pressure and should not be a factor in considering requests for exemption under Article 19 of the Charter. The Group endorsed the recommendation of the Committee on Contributions concerning the four Member States which had submitted requests for exemption under Article 19.

15. **Mr. Presutti** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Iceland and Turkey; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, said that, while the Fifth Committee was not tasked with preparing a decision on the matter at the current session, the review of the methodology used to calculate the scale of assessments presented by the Committee on Contributions provided valuable elements that merited consideration as part of the General Assembly's efforts to enhance that methodology.

16. Funding the United Nations was the responsibility of all Member States and was essential to the effective functioning of the Organization. There was still room to improve the methodology to reflect a more equitable and balanced distribution of the

financial responsibilities among Member States, according to their capacity to pay. The current methodology produced a scale that no longer reflected that principle accurately; the low per capita income adjustment was providing generalized and increasing relief to a large number of Member States, while the poorer Members, for which the adjustment had been designed, benefited only to a limited extent.

17. With regard to the requests for exemptions under Article 19 of the Charter, he reiterated that the payment of assessed contributions on time, in full and without conditions was a fundamental duty of all Member States. Nevertheless, some States might face genuine temporary difficulties in discharging that duty for reasons beyond their control. Multi-year payment plans were effective tools that helped Member States to reduce their unpaid assessed contributions. He therefore endorsed the recommendations of the Committee on Contributions regarding exemptions under Article 19 of the Charter.

18. **Mr. Nagao** (Japan), recalling that Japan was the second largest contributor to the United Nations, said that his country had paid its dues faithfully, despite the economic and financial difficulties it was facing. His delegation supported the principle of capacity to pay. However, the changing world economic situation required the Organization to develop an assessment methodology that reflected more equitably each Member States' real and current capacity to pay, based on the most current, comprehensive and comparable data available.

19. His delegation endorsed the recommendations of the Committee on Contributions regarding exemptions under Article 19 of the Charter and encouraged those Member States in arrears to consider submitting multi-year payment plans.

20. **Ms. Guo** Zhiqi (China) said that the methodology used to establish the scale of assessments, must continue to adhere strictly to the principle of capacity to pay, in accordance with the rules of procedure and subsequent resolutions of the General Assembly on the matter. Suggestions and proposals put forward by Member States should therefore comply with and conform to that principle. A comprehensive and integrated perspective was needed to measure a country's capacity to pay, taking into account not only GNI, but also per capita income, which was defined in the report of the Committee on Contributions as "GNI divided by the population of a country", a simple definition that her delegation hoped the Committee would bear in mind during its deliberations.

21. Other elements of the methodology, including the low per capita income adjustment were equally important. Her delegation was firmly opposed to the ulterior motives, double standards and discriminatory practices of certain delegations when discussing that adjustment, which had been an important element of the scale methodology since the earliest days of the United Nations. The threshold level of per capita GNI was the sole criterion for determining which Member States should benefit from the adjustment and it should be retained as currently formulated, as it was a good solution to the problem of how to determine the different levels of relief for low-income countries.

22. Her country's contribution had more than doubled from 2.053 per cent in 2004, to 5.148 per cent today. As the world's largest developing country, China's economy had enjoyed years of rapid growth, but the country was now in a period of structural economic adjustment to determine the appropriate rate of growth. In addition, the economy was under a great deal of pressure as a result of the global economic downturn, and the Government was faced with the task of trying to improve the living conditions of China's 1.3 billion people and to address uneven regional development within the country. The Government had therefore placed strict controls on expenditures in an effort to improve fiscal efficiency. Despite those circumstances, her country had duly met its financial obligations to the United Nations and had paid contributions in the amount of $134 million in 2014.

23. **Mr. Haniff** (Malaysia) said that Member States had a duty to contribute the resources that the United Nations needed to carry out its mandates. However the scale of assessments should be based on an equitable and balanced methodology, which in turn required Member States to provide the most up-to-date economic information and data. The international economic situation had affected many Member States, including Malaysia, but his country would continue to pay its contributions in a consistent and timely manner.

24. The principle of capacity to pay was fundamental to the apportionment of expenses of the Organization. His delegation welcomed the efforts of the Committee on Contributions to improve the methodology in order to collect higher contributions from developed and

developing countries; however the Committee on Contributions should continue to take into account the views of Member States, particularly developing countries that had a limited capacity to pay. In that connection, he endorsed the recommendations of the Committee on Contributions regarding exemptions under Article 19 of the Charter, as the countries concerned were undergoing considerable security, political and economic challenges that were beyond their control. He urged Member States that were experiencing financial difficulties to take advantage of multi-year payment plans to reduce their unpaid assessment.

Agenda item 132: Programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (*continued*) (A/C.5/69/L.2)

United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (*continued*)

Draft resolution A/C.5/69/L.2

25. *Draft resolution A/C.5/69/L.2 was adopted.*

26. **Mr. Kutesa** (President of the General Assembly) said that the adoption of the draft resolution sent a strong message about the Organization's ability to deliver on critical and pressing global issues effectively and expeditiously. The Ebola outbreak continued to inflict grave consequences on the affected countries in West Africa and posed a complex, multidimensional threat with serious humanitarian, economic, social and security ramifications. To date, some 6,500 people had been infected, and nearly half of those individuals had succumbed to the disease, statistics that put the scope and magnitude of the disaster into perspective.

27. He reiterated that bold, urgent and coordinated action by the international community was required to combat the virus, prevent its exponential spread and contain it both geographically and in terms of the number of casualties. The time to act was now. Ebola was no longer a subregional or even a regional calamity, it was an international crisis.

28. In its resolution 69/1, the General Assembly had supported the Secretary-General's proposal to establish the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER), the first system-wide mission and the first United Nations emergency health mission. Teams had already been deployed to UNMEER headquarters in Ghana and to Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The establishment of UNMEER was the first step in global efforts to contain the outbreak, which must be further strengthened by a wide range of actions and measures at all levels, the most important of which would be to mobilize the necessary financial support, as well as humanitarian and medical assistance.

29. By adopting a coordinated and coherent approach, UNMEER was expected to deliver its mandate effectively and efficiently. The Mission would harness the capabilities of the entire Organization to undertake its activities in a prompt, cohesive manner on the ground, while ensuring the coordination and complementarity of efforts at the international, regional and national levels. He commended the initiative and dedication shown by staff of the United Nations and other entities and partners that would participate in UNMEER. The speedy deployment of UNMEER was unprecedented and he welcomed the concerted national, regional and international efforts to combat the outbreak, particularly those of the Government of Ghana, which would host the Mission.

30. The timeliness of the resolution augured well for the Committee's future work and he urged delegates to build upon the momentum in order to develop greater trust among Member States with the goal of finalizing the Committee's work within the prescribed time frames. In addressing its heavy agenda, the challenge facing the Committee would be reconciling the need for transparent, effective and efficient utilization of resources with the demands for effective and expeditious delivery on the ground. Member States had a collective responsibility to increase the efficiency of the Organization without sacrificing the quality and inclusiveness of activities and programmes. That complex task would depend heavily on an open, inclusive and transparent decision-making process, with a view to reaching consensus on all agenda items.

Agenda item 133: Programme planning (A/69/6 (Part one and Progs. 1-28), A/69/16 and A/69/144)

31. **Mr. Mwinyi** (Chair of the Committee for Programme and Coordination), introducing the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) on its fifty-fourth session (A/69/16), held in June 2014, said that CPC had reviewed the Secretary-General's proposed strategic framework, paying particular attention to programme changes arising out of decisions adopted by intergovernmental organs or

proposed by the Secretary-General. In that regard, the report contained the Committee's conclusions and recommendations concerning the programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 2012-2013, the proposed strategic framework for the period 2016-2017 and reports on evaluations issued by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS). CPC had also supported the Economic and Social Council in the performance of its coordination functions by reviewing the annual reports of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and making recommendations in that respect.

32. Following its review of the report of the Secretary-General on the programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 2012-2013 (A/67/144), CPC had recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to include the following information in future programme performance reports: the impact of programme budget strains on programme implementation; a comparison with the previous biennium of the rate of implementation of mandated outputs as well as of additional outputs implemented at the initiative of the Secretariat; the main factors affecting the implementation of mandated outputs, when the rate of implementation was below 90 per cent; and the impact of the reduction in the number of printed documents on the intergovernmental decision-making process in United Nations conferences and meetings. CPC had also stressed the importance of using programme performance reports as a management tool in the strategic framework planning process, in line with the principles of results-based management, and had recalled that the implementation of the paper-smart concept was on a pilot basis, as decided by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/233.

33. With regard to the individual programmes of the proposed strategic framework (A/69/6 (Progs. 1-28)), CPC had been able to reach consensus and provide substantive guidance and recommendations on all of the 28 programme plans. With regard to the plan outline of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2016-2017 (A/69/6 (Part one)), although CPC had recommended the approval of the eight priorities for the period 2016-2017 contained in paragraph 34 of the plan outline, owing to differences between Member States on some aspects, it had also recommended that the General Assembly should review the plan outline at its sixty-ninth session, under the agenda item entitled "Programme planning".

34. CPC had reviewed the OIOS report on the triennial review of implementation of recommendations made by CPC at its fifty-first session on the programme evaluation of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and had recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to entrust OIOS to include in its future recommendations, where possible, indicators that would make the impact or result of implementing such recommendations measurable.

35. With regard to the CEB overview report for 2013, CPC had, inter alia, recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to promote among United Nations entities the continuation of mainstreaming support for South-South cooperation into the regular country-level programming of operational activities for development; to continue to harmonize and simplify business practices and generate efficiencies by reducing administrative and procedural burdens, with the aim of increasing the coherence, coordination, effectiveness, accountability and credibility of the United Nations system; and sharing, through the High-level Committee on Management, examples of positive lessons learned on the implementation of good practices in performance management with human resources directors of member organizations.

36. CPC had further recommended that the General Assembly should request CEB to include in its reports information on ways and means for strengthening the Board's role to foster policy coherence in the United Nations system in order to ensure coordinated and effective action on programmatic, management and operational issues linked to the post-2015 development agenda; progress on the implementation of resolution 67/292 with regard to a coordinated approach on multilingualism within the United Nations system; and the results achieved by the new vendor registration system with regard to increasing the participation of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the procurement processes of the United Nations system.

37. Lastly, with regard to United Nations system support for NEPAD, CPC had recommended that the General Assembly should endorse the conclusions and recommendations contained in paragraphs 112 to 119

of the report of the Secretary-General. It had also recommended that the General Assembly should reiterate its request to the organizations of the United Nations system to continue to strive for greater coherence in their work in support of NEPAD and had called upon the United Nations system to continue to mainstream the special needs of Africa into all of its normative and operational activities. The General Assembly should also request the organizations of the United Nations system to continue to coordinate closely with the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency and other structures of the African Union Commission. The Assembly should emphasize the need to continue to take fully into account the views, comments and/or inputs of the African Union and other regional mechanisms in policy formulation and decision-making. Moreover, recognizing the important role of hard infrastructure in Africa, in particular energy, railways and highways, CPC had recommended that the General Assembly should reiterate its request to the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to mobilize United Nations system support in that area. CPC had further recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to continue to include in his future reports detailed information on the possible outcomes of the achievements of NEPAD targets, especially tangible actions and results of United Nations system support for NEPAD projects and on the status of implementation of the monitoring mechanism.

38. **Mr. Huisman** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division), introducing the proposed strategic framework for the period 2016-2017 (A/69/6 (Part one and Progs. 1-28)), said that the strategic framework had been prepared in accordance with the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, and in accordance with General Assembly resolution 58/269. By the same resolution, the General Assembly had affirmed that the strategic framework should constitute the principal policy directive of the United Nations. The strategic framework also took into account the guidance provided by the General Assembly in its resolutions 59/275, 61/235, 62/224, 63/247, 64/229, 65/244, 66/8 and 67/236.

39. The proposed strategic framework, which was made up of the plan outline and 28 programme plans, was based on legislative mandates and would form the basis for the biennial programme budget proposals for 2016-2017. A list of key legislative mandates was provided at the end of each programme section. The plan outline had been prepared under the leadership of the Secretary-General with the full involvement of senior management of the Secretariat and focused on the eight priority areas of work identified by the General Assembly in its resolution 65/262 and the vision set out by the Secretary-General for responding to those challenges.

40. The proposed strategic framework had been subject to intergovernmental review by relevant sectoral, functional and regional bodies. The outcomes of some of those reviews had already been incorporated into the document. In other instances, the intergovernmental review had occurred after the finalization of initial proposals, and modifications had been provided to CPC during its review of the proposed strategic framework at its fifty-fourth session. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 58/269, programme plans would be updated as appropriate to reflect the impact of intergovernmental decisions taken subsequent to the preparation of the proposed framework. Such changes would be included in the introduction of the budget fascicles and submitted to CPC.

41. The application of a methodology that demonstrated the relationship between objectives, expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement, introduced in 2002, had resulted in improvements to the proposed strategic framework. In addition, in line with recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, set out in the report on its fiftieth session (A/65/16), the Secretariat had engaged in coordinated efforts to improve the formulation of subprogramme logical frameworks so as to facilitate their use as a management tool and provide Member States with more information on planned results. The refinements made to the logical frameworks were intended to improve accountability in line with General Assembly resolution 64/259.

42. **Mr. Baez** (Under-Secretary-General for Management), introducing the Secretary-General's programme performance report of the United Nations for the biennium 2012-2013 (A/69/144), said that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/245, responsibility for preparing the programme performance report had been transferred from OIOS to the Department

of Management. The report contained information on the implementation of 33,696 outputs — the traditional measure of performance — and provided an overall account of the results achieved by the Organization for a total of 876 expected accomplishments under the 36 sections of the programme budget.

43. Section II of the report highlighted the main results achieved by the Organization under its ten programme elements, offering Member States the opportunity to assess the Secretariat's performance at an aggregate level, while section III covered output implementation rate in the Secretariat, which had increased from 90 per cent in 2010-2011, to 91 per cent in 2012-2013. Only three budget sections had implemented less than 80 per cent of their mandated outputs, namely, disarmament (79 per cent), public information (77 per cent) and safety and security (70 per cent). Section IV of the report highlighted the performance of the different budget sections at the programme and subprogramme levels and included information on some of the challenges faced by departments in meeting their goals. Several related recommendations of CPC, as set out in its report (A/69/16) were before the Fifth Committee for its consideration.

44. **Ms. Rios Requena** (Plurinational State of Bolivia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group attached great importance to the work of CPC as the main subsidiary organ of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council responsible for supporting the crucial task of translating intergovernmental mandates into workable programmes. CPC offered guidance to the Secretariat by interpreting legislative intent and developed evaluation procedures to improve programme design and avoid duplication of efforts. The Group fully endorsed the recommendations and conclusions contained in the report of CPC on its fifty-fourth session.

45. The Group welcomed the guidance provided by CPC on the proposed strategic framework for 2016-2017, but stressed that the task of setting the priorities of the United Nations was the exclusive prerogative of Member States.

46. The Group was committed to ensuring that the programme narratives of the proposed programme budget the biennium 2016-2017 took into account the outcome document of the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States and the post-2015 development agenda, which was expected to be finalized shortly. The programmes would then be submitted for consideration to CPC, in line with established procedures. The Group expected that the recommendations and conclusions of CPC would be diligently implemented by the Secretariat, and that, in accordance with those recommendations and conclusions, the Secretariat would consult widely with Member States before presenting proposals on management reforms to the General Assembly.

47. CEB should play an important role in improving coordination within the United Nations system and enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Organization. The Group therefore encouraged the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to continue to take actions designed to enhance the Board's transparency and accountability to Member States. The Board should continue to act in accordance with its mandate of enhancing system-wide coordination and in conformity with the intergovernmental mandates of its member organizations. The Group welcomed the continued cooperation between CEB, the International Civil Service Commission and the Joint Inspection Unit, and called for more effective dialogue and cooperation on matters of common interest.

48. **Mr. Onuma** (Japan) said that his country recognized the significant role that CPC played in the review of the proposed regular budget, and believed that strengthening its role and functions would have a positive impact on the budget process. In particular, CPC could identify areas of overlap and duplication throughout the system.

49. While discussions at the fifty-fourth session of CPC had been fruitful, the overlap in the sessions of CPC and the second part of the resumed session of the Fifth Committee had imposed a heavy burden on both Member States and the Secretariat, which had affected the progress of deliberations in both bodies. It was important that both Member States and the Secretariat should make further efforts to avoid, or at the very least minimize, any potential overlap in future.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.